



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Memorandum

Subject: **ACTION:** AIR-200 Policy Memorandum #97-06,
Aircraft Certification Systems Evaluation Program
(ACSEP) Quality Improvement Program

Date: March 25, 1997

From: Manager, Aircraft Engineering Division, AIR-100
Acting Manager, Production & Airworthiness
Certification Division, AIR-200

Reply to
Attn. of:

To: All Aircraft Certification Directorates
All Aircraft Certification Offices
All Manufacturing Inspection Offices and Manufacturing
Inspection District/Satellite Offices

Order 8100.7, Aircraft Certification Systems Evaluation Program, requires the establishment of a quality improvement program to assess ACSEP evaluations, seek standardization and continuous improvement, counsel team leaders and members, and recommend policy and guidance changes. Within the context of this requirement, a National Continuous Improvement Team (NCIT) was chartered by the ACOMT/MIMT in March 1994. In December 1995, the Planning & Program Management Division, AIR-500, published the *Report on the Evaluation of the Aircraft Certification Systems Evaluation Program*. Finding 4.c.(6) of this report recommended re-evaluation and improvement of the continuous improvement team process, specifically in communicating decisions and rationale to the work force and in identifying the level of the NCIT's empowerment. In response to this finding, AIR-100/200 requested the Aircraft Certification Management Team (ACMT) to develop an NCIT and Directorate/Division Continuous Improvement Team (DCIT) improvement strategy and coordinate the strategy with the NCIT. The ACMT strategy was submitted to the NCIT chairperson in May 1996, and discussed at the NCIT conference in July 1996. The coordinated NCIT reply was forwarded to the ACMT in August 1996 and formally accepted by the ACMT and NCIT at the NCIT conference in January 1997.

The ACSEP Quality Improvement Program is defined as follows:

a. A National Continuous Improvement Team will be chartered and established. Roles and responsibilities will be as delineated in the current version of the ACOMT/MIMT-approved NCIT charter. The charter will include designation of ACMT linking members to the NCIT. The ACMT linking members will assist the team in staying focused on national issues, and bring the ACMT perspective to the NCIT. The AIR-100 and AIR-200 division managers will be the ACMT linking members to the NCIT. The NCIT will evaluate all proposed improvements that are national in scope

and determine a course of action that is in the best interest of aviation safety. For improvements that require new or revised policy, the NCIT is empowered to move good ideas forward quicker by developing draft policy for official signature for those ideas that need it, and by directly implementing others that do not need official policy. When draft policy is required, the NCIT will establish a time frame for completion and identify a lead member to promptly develop coordinated draft policy for official signature.

b. A continuous improvement team will be chartered and established in each directorate and at headquarters. The charter will include the following items:

1. Team Composition.

- (a) The composition of the directorate DCIT will represent managers, aerospace engineers, flight test pilots, and aviation safety inspectors (manufacturing) participating in ACSEP evaluations and administration, and includes the directorate NCIT member. The directorate DCIT will also include the Assistant Directorate Manager.

- (b) The composition of the headquarters DCIT will represent technical specialists, aerospace/manufacturing engineers, and aviation safety inspectors (manufacturing) participating in development of ACSEP policy, training, and automated systems, and in the performance of ACSEP evaluations and data analysis. The headquarters DCIT will include the AIR-100 and AIR-200 NCIT members, the AIR-100 Assistant Manager, and the AIR-230 Branch Manager.

2. Each DCIT will meet regularly, but, as a minimum, prior to and following the NCIT meeting. Logistics of each meeting (e.g., on-site meeting, telecon) are at the discretion of each DCIT.

3. Each DCIT will discuss local and national ACSEP continuous improvement issues. Local issues will be resolved by each DCIT; these include issues such as resource allocation (people and dollars). National issues will be discussed and each DCIT will document a position for presentation by its NCIT member to the NCIT. ACMT members, members of other management teams, branch managers, ACSEP evaluators, and any other interested person(s) may also submit suggestions for improvement to their respective DCIT.

4. Each DCIT will develop and utilize a strategy regarding the handling of NCIT results and decisions as follows:

- (a) Communicate NCIT results and decisions to all respective directorate and headquarters employees.

- (b) Implement NCIT results and decisions in directorate and headquarters ACSEP activity.

5. Each NCIT member is responsible to know and understand his or her respective DCIT positions on each issue, and for presenting these positions during each NCIT conference. The NCIT

member will also coordinate draft policy and guidance developed by the NCIT with his or her respective DCIT to help minimize comments during the formal coordination process.

6. Each NCIT member will submit NCIT proposals to his or her respective DCIT and transmit DCIT comments on these proposals to the NCIT within the time limits established by the NCIT.

If there are any questions, please contact the Production and Airworthiness Certification Division at (202) 267-8361.

/s/

/s/

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